

**COMMITTEE ON EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES
MINUTES
AUGUST 20, 2001**

The Committee on Equal Opportunities met August 20, 2001, at the council's offices in Frankfort. The following members were in attendance: Mr. Baker, Ms. Helm, Ms. Prather, Mr. Thomas, Ms. Watts, Ms. Weinberg, and Mr. Wilson. Members absent: Mr. Cunningham, Mr. Graham, Mr. Robinson, and Mr. Welch. Mr. Barger chaired the meeting.

The minutes of the June 25, 2001, meeting were approved as presented.

The Kentucky State P-16 Council – Opportunities for Collaboration

Mr. Jackson provided some background. At the last meeting, the committee agreed that someone from the P-16 Council would provide a basic overview of the activities and planning issues that the P-16 is dealing with, particularly in the area of equity and math/science.

Dianne Bazell, Council on Postsecondary Education and works as staff to the P-16 Council, and Lois Adams-Rodgers, Kentucky Department of Education and deputy commissioner to Commissioner Wilhoit, made the presentation.

The Kentucky Board of Education and the Council on Postsecondary Education met for the first time in 1999 and decided to create the P-16 Council (pre-kindergarten through senior year of college). The P-16 Council is comprised of representatives from the Council on Postsecondary Education, the State Board of Education, and the executive director and the chair of the Education Professional Standards Board.

The P-16 Council has dealt with three main issues for the past two years: preparation and professional development of teachers, the alignment of the K-12 curriculum and testing methods with postsecondary curriculum and testing methods, and the transition of students throughout the system.

At age 17, few Americans are able to do complicated math. African American students have the greatest disadvantage because, in part, they have been blocked out of the rigorous math courses that others are steered into.

The math team recommended that all students be ready for algebra by ninth grade and that all students take math every year of high school. The math team also recommended a description of algebra II courses that does not exist in the program of studies at the Department of Education.

The reading team recommended having reading for comprehension, vocabulary, development, and critical analyses taught throughout the P-12 system and postsecondary and not just until third grade.

There are three ways the CEO's plan of work and the P-16 Council's plan of work could coincide: 1) make sure that every African American student is ready to take algebra no later than ninth grade; 2) make sure that every African American high school student in Kentucky has access to the highest level of mathematics available in any Kentucky high school; and 3) make sure that data are available to know how African American students are doing in our schools and in our postsecondary institutions, which policies work and which don't, and find out the preparation level of the teachers of all African American students in the schools in which they predominate in this state.

An issue that the state board is discussing is the program of studies. The state board, by statute and by regulation, sets minimum high school graduation requirements. The local boards of education, through their policy authority, can expand those requirements. Any board of education could require a fourth year of mathematics – very few do. But because of conversations conducted with the presidents of the institutions, and because the issue has been on the table at the P-16 Council, there is a different level of awareness about why that is so important.

A policy item on the P-16 Council's agenda is the issue of school counselors. In July, a three-day institute provided by the Education Trust was held and 40 counselors and counselor educators from the institutions attended. A very challenging discussion was held about how the counselor can be an advocate for all students as opposed to being the person who schedules classes and counsels students.

Kentucky holds schools accountable for moving students out of the apprentice category and into the proficient category and beyond. There are seven school districts that represent over 75 percent of minority student enrollment. All seven of those school districts are part of a partnership with the Department of Education to focus on improving student achievement in those school districts.

Reconsideration of Morehead State University Request for a Qualitative Waiver

Ron Eaglin, president; Mike Moore, executive vice president for academic affairs; and Francene Botts-Butler, director of the multicultural center and affirmative action officer, made the presentation.

According to the August presentation to the Committee on Equal Opportunities, Morehead has:

- Hosted Lincoln Foundation's Whitney Young Scholars Program (23 students participated).
- Employed an African American recruiter for admissions office with primary focus in Lexington, Louisville, and the northern Kentucky area.
- Involved African American alumni in the recruitment and retention of African American students.
- Hosted a record number of more than 100 students in the Governor's Minority Scholars College Program through the Minority Teacher Education Program.
- Projected an increase in African American students enrolling as first-time freshmen for the 2001 fall semester.

- Established a multicultural student services center located in highly visible, accessible area of campus.
- Created a campuswide early intervention program to help students make academic progress.
- Changed its probation policy (increased from two to three the number of semesters a student may remain on probation prior to dismissal).
- Implemented mid-term and end-of-semester intervention by the multicultural student services staff.
- Established individual student consultations.
- Initiated tutorial support at the multicultural student services center for African American students.
- Established and funded five Kentucky resident African American graduate assistantships.
- Continued work with UK and UofL on the “Faculty for the Future” fellowship program.
- Continued emphasis on the Graduate Preview Day that was initiated March 2001.
- Utilized minority teacher data bank of the Kentucky Department of Education to recruit Kentucky African American graduate students.
- Utilized Morehead State University alumni lists for recruitment of African American graduates for graduate and professional programs.
- Invited all current junior and senior African American students through direct mailings to consider enrolling in Morehead State University’s graduate programs.
- Continued recruitment of African American graduate students through historically black colleges and universities with special emphasis on Kentucky State University students.
- Reinforced authority of Affirmative Action Officer in hiring processes.
- Closely monitored nearly 100 employment searches and terminated two searches due to inadequate minority representation in pool.
- Interviewed all African American applicants meeting minimum qualifications for all positions for which they applied.
- Employed African American faculty member to supervise student teachers and teach in the college of education.
- Reconstituted the Affirmative Action Committee and renamed it the Campus Environment Team/Affirmative Action Committee.
- Retained African American faculty member in human sciences by establishing a new position.
- Funded two newly created positions in the colleges of business and education.
- Increased African American faculty from 10 to 13.
- Increased African American professional non-faculty from 11 to 12 (of 16 African American applicants, 4 were interviewed, 3 accepted employment, and one declined).

As part of the action agenda, funds that were made available to the institution in the faculty development trust fund were used to expand the Center for Teaching and Learning. One of the newer programs is a mentoring program for all faculty. A specific focus on mentoring African American faculty is hoped to have a positive affect on all faculty.

If the Council on Postsecondary Education grants the waiver, two new programs will be added.

The committee urged MoSU to use this opportunity to improve recruitment in faculty, staff, and students.

The committee passed the motion to recommend that the council grant the waiver to Morehead State University.

A discussion followed.

Equal Opportunity Planning Adult Education in Kentucky – Opportunities for Collaboration

Cheryl King, associate vice president for adult education, made the presentation.

A partnership of the Council on Postsecondary Education and the Cabinet for Workforce Development is the result of Senate Bill 1. This partnership is an opportunity to create a strategic agenda for adult education in Kentucky and to increase and improve upon the numbers of Kentuckians who are participating and enrolling in adult education.

In 1997, the Kentucky Adult Literacy Survey indicated about 40 percent (or 1 million Kentuckians) function at the two lowest levels of literacy. Approximately 825,000 Kentuckians do not have a high school diploma. There are approximately 20 counties in Kentucky where over 70 percent of their population have not graduated from high school.

Governor Patton created the Adult Education Task Force in 1998. The task force provided a report that formulated the basis for SB 1. The council, the cabinet, and the Department for Adult Education and Literacy created the strategic plan for adult education.

A nine-point adult education plan was also created. This blends funding from the department for adult education and the council to create one plan to increase the numbers of Kentuckians that take advantage of these opportunities. These services are free. These services are to improve literacy levels, decrease the number of Kentuckians without a high school diploma, and significantly increase the enrollment in postsecondary education in Kentucky.

Kentuckians eligible for these free services must be 16 years of age or older, they must not be enrolled in secondary school, and they may have a high school diploma but are still functioning in their basic skill area below the 12th grade level.

The services provided are GED services, English as a second language, work place education, and family literacy. This is being accomplished through a system comprised of learning centers in every county in Kentucky. There are funds that support literacy services in Kentucky's correctional facilities. As of July, family literacy programs are available in all 120 counties in Kentucky, and distance learning opportunities through KET and the Kentucky Virtual University and Virtual Library are used to provide services as well.

About 13,900 individuals passed the GED in 2000-2001.

An increased number of students are enrolling in programs. Progress is measured based on the grade level gains that people make after enrolling. The numbers of people who meet their goals - whether that means getting employment, getting a better job, going on to postsecondary education, or just simply increasing their reading or their math levels - are using our local learning centers.

The nine-point plan is guided by five questions that look very much like the five questions that guide the progress and work of the council efforts. Performance indicators have been approved by the council and as part of the state plan through the U.S. Department of Education. Progress is also measured in terms of our programs throughout Kentucky with their performance and the number of people they serve in meeting enrollment and performance goals. A reward system is set for those programs that meet all goals.

Statewide information technology and distance learning are part of the plan. Kentucky is doing things with distance learning that no other state is attempting at this point. Students will be served through the virtual university. The Kentucky virtual adult education site will be up and running sometime in August. The process of purchasing statewide licenses for curricular products that will be on the virtual university for Kentuckians, if they have Internet access, is underway. The virtual library has mini-data bases available for instructors to access to find the best curriculum, information, and resources available.

An 800 number goes to the KYVU and people are referred to the local learning center. Learning centers and testing centers are not the same. Every county has learning centers but not every county has a testing site or satellite. All the learning centers provide the practice GED.

The learning centers are becoming a recruiting source for institutions. Through the learning centers, KET, and other outlets, recruiting information is provided to the postsecondary institutions.

Equal Opportunity Planning – State Gear Up Grant Opportunities for Collaboration

Yvonne Lovell, project director, Gear Up Kentucky, made the presentation.

Gear Up is a federal initiative. There are two kinds of Gear Up programs – state grants and partnerships. Kentucky has both. The Council on Postsecondary Education administers the state program jointly with the Kentucky Department of Education. Last September a grant for \$10 million was received. That is matched by another \$10 million of non-federal resources.

Thirty-four schools participate. This fall, approximately 11,000 students will participate because in mid-September year two begins and the new 7th grade cohort will be included. Gear Up uses a cohort model. All students in the 7th grade at the schools selected will receive the benefits of the Gear Up program rather than targeting certain students.

Partners are relied on to help this program. In conjunction with the 34 schools, there are 24 postsecondary education institutions that are aligned with schools in their counties or districts. Of those 24 postsecondary institutions, eight of them are the administrators of Gear Up in each

region. In addition to the postsecondary institutions, there are 15 non-school partners. One is the Prichard Committee which is conducting some parent training for some of the Gear Up students.

Forty-three percent of the parents surveyed in March want their children to have a graduate or a professional degree. One percent of those parents said that they don't want their children to go to college. Of that number, 83 percent had never spoken to anyone about college, college planning, or cost. Students may want to go to college but lack the information. Seventy-six percent of Gear Up students intend to continue their education beyond high school and 31 percent want to get a graduate or a professional degree. But 75 percent of those students have never talked anyone about what it takes to go to college. The notion behind Gear Up is that attending college is integrally linked to graduation from high school.

Currently designated Gear Up schools were surveyed (this is previous year's data). Of the 36 schools at the time, 30 of them have academic indices that are lower than the state average. The Gear Up academic state average is 46.2 percent compared with 51.3 percent for the state. Eight of the Gear Up schools were among the 40 middle schools with the lowest state index.

Only 22 percent of Gear Up students were enrolled in either pre-algebra or an algebra course. Standardized tests for these students showed that 28 percent were proficient in math. Science was zero and reading was 8 percent. The state's percentage in math is 37 percent, science 1 percent, and reading 12 percent. Gear Up students were not enrolled in above grade level courses. Only 17 percent of them reportedly were in math, 12 percent in science, and 14 percent in language arts.

It has been determined that Gear Up will focus primarily in three academic areas -- mathematics, science, and language arts. Because it is a middle school driven program, algebra is a focus. The program will also take a look at how well students are being prepared to do scientific work or learn sciences in the natural world. Gear Up is based on the premise that if students stay in school, study hard, and take the right courses, they are going to go to college. The hypothesis is that if academic performance is improved and awareness of middle school students about college is raised, the likelihood that they will go on to college will be improved.

Gear Up Kentucky cannot accomplish this task of moving these particular 7th and 8th grade students to high school without the full support of all of the other initiatives and programs that are in place. Heavy emphasis is placed on partnerships and collaboration. Gear Up Kentucky is a five-year grant.

Governor's Conference on Postsecondary Education Trusteeship

The Governor's Trusteeship Conference will be held in Louisville on September 16 and 17. At noon on the 16th, a joint meeting between the council and the Committee on Equal Opportunities is planned. Janis Somerville will be making a presentation at that meeting.

Partnership Agreement Site Visit to Kentucky State University

The Office for Civil Rights and the Committee on Equal Opportunities are scheduled to conduct a site visit at Kentucky State University in mid-September. The committee will be notified when a date has been selected.

Other Business

The next scheduled CEO meeting is October 15 at 9 a.m. at the council's offices.

The chair appointed a waiver review subcommittee to expedite the discussion of the guidelines for qualitative waivers. Wendell Thomas, Walter Baker, Hilma Prather, and Rep. Graham will serve on this subcommittee. Marlene Helm will chair the subcommittee. This subcommittee should provide a preliminary report to the CEO at the October meeting.

Louis Coleman from the Justice Resource Center addressed the committee. Mr. Coleman expressed concern about Kentucky State University being the only university for a campus visit by the Office for Civil Rights. He also expressed concern about not receiving a response to a letter sent to the Governor and President Davies about the same issue.

Mr. Jackson responded that the basis of the OCR's decision to postpone visits to the other institutions and continue to visit KSU is that the OCR had already visited the other institutions. The OCR made recommendations for the other institutions to implement and they wanted to provide adequate time for those institutions to actually develop and implement those programs. The OCR will be visiting those institutions again next year.

Mr. Jackson informed Mr. Coleman that a response from Gordon Davies was mailed July 12. Upon adjournment of this meeting, another copy of that response was faxed to Mr. Coleman.

The meeting adjourned.

Sherron Jackson, Senior Associate
EEO & Finance

Carrie Lee Dean, Executive Secretary